DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 050 SO 017 043

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE | Keeping Sex Equity Issues "In The News." A Collection of Brief Articles for Reprints in School Newsletters and Bulletins. |
| INSTITUTION | Michigan State Board of Education, Lansing. Office for Sex Equity in Education. |
| PUB DATE | 84 |
| NOTE | 26p. |
| PUB TYPE | Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Viewpoints (120) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC02 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | Child Development; Childhood Needs; Child Neglect; Child Rearing; Computer Science Education; Day Care; Educational Discrimination; Elementary Secondary Education; *Equal Education; Equal Facilities; Females; Feminism; Gifted; Males; Nontraditional Occupations; *Sex Fairness; *Sex Stereotypes; Womens Education |
| IDENTIFIERS | Title IX Education Amendments 1972 |

ABSTRACT

A collection of 16 brief articles are provided as possible reprints for newsletters and bulletins in school district working to achieve Title IX compliance and sex equity. Topics covered are: children's spare time, women in nontraditional jobs, changing work patterns, females and math, tots and toys, child care and working parents, tomboys, gifted females, boys as nurturing parents, latchkey children, household chores in nontraditional families, the men's movement, sex equity in computer education, computerphobia, and teacher expectations on achievement. Each article runs from one-half to one page in length. An evaluation form is included. (LP)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Cindy Li

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED268050

SP017043

Michigan State Board of Education

Office for Sex Equity in Education

Fall 1984

## STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Norman Otto Stockmeyer, Sr., President . . . . . .Westland

Barbara Dumouchelle, Vice-President. . . . . .Grosse Ile

Barbara Roberts Mason, Secretary . . . . . Lansing

Dorothy Beardmore, Treasurer . . . . . Rochester

Dr. Edmund F. Vandetter, NASBE Delegate. . . . . .Houghton

Carroll M. Hutton. . . . . .Highland

Cherry Jacobus . . . . . East Grand Rapids

Annetta Miller . . . . . Huntington Woods

## EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

James J. Blanchard, Governor

Phillip E. Runkel, Superintendent of Public Instruction

**MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**STATEMENT OF ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL LAW**

The Michigan State Board of Education complies with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education. It is the policy of the Michigan State Board of Education that no person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, sex, marital status or handicap shall be discriminated against, excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of or otherwise be subjected to discrimination in any program or activity for which it is responsible or for which it receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education.

Table of Contents


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Children's Spare Time | 1 |
| Crossing Over | 2 |
| Changing Work Patterns to Fit Changing Needs | 3 |
| Females and Math: The Path Not Chosen | 4 |
| Tots and Toys | 6 |
| Child Care and Working Parents | 7 |
| Tomboy Behavior in Little Girls Can Be a Positive Influence | 8 |
| Gifted Females | 9 |
| Boys as Nuturing Parents | 11 |
| The Latchkey Children | 12 |
| Look Who's Doing the Shopping | 13 |
| Kids Who March to a Different Drummer | 14 |
| There is a Men's Movement | 15 |
| A Concern with Computers | 16 |
| Computerphobia | 18 |
| Race, Sex Attitude, and Achievement: The Effect of Teacher Expectations | 20 |

A NOTE TO THE USER

School districts which are working to achieve Title IX compliance and sex equity often want to expand their activities to include parent and community groups, as well as staff and students. One way to include parent/community groups is to begin communicating with them through school newsletters, bulletins, newspapers, etc. on how issues of sex equity are affecting their home, the work force, and their schools. This packet is designed to introduce parent/community groups to the issue of sex equity through articles which may be of interest to parents.

This packet includes 16 brief articles which can be reprinted in school publications. In preparing the articles, the Office for Sex Equity has tried to appreciate the limited space which building principals or central administrators may have in their newsletters or building bulletins. The longest articles, one on gifted females, and one on females and the math curriculum, are only 336 words in length. The shortest article, on women and men in nontraditional jobs, is just 120 words. Also, the Office has tried to collect a variety of topics which will interest parents. Most of the articles address children's interests or choices they make in growing up. A few of the articles deal with parent concerns such as child care, child rearing and family living styles. All of the articles are based on research or facts, not opinions.

As users, you should feel free to use the articles in whatever way is best suited to your purposes. Revise if you wish. Select just a sentence or two and reprint that at the bottom of the school menu, knowing you are backed with more information in your files. Select just the first few paragraphs from a favorite article and reprint the other paragraphs in a "series" on that topic. Focus on one interesting fact or statistic from an article, and ask readers to respond to it. In short, match your creativity with the space you can find in any printed material from the building or district!

If you use this packet, the Office for Sex Equity would appreciate your comments on the usefulness of the materials. The short evaluation form (below) should be completed and mailed to us.

---

ARTICLES PACKET: Evaluation Form

(Return to Office for Sex Equity, PO Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909)

Name (optional):_____

School District:_____

Role (teacher, principal, etc.):_____

1. How did you use this packet of articles?_____

   _____

2. Are there any topics of interest you wish would have been included in the articles but weren't?_____

   _____

3. Do you have any suggestions for improving this packet?_____

   _____

# CHILDREN'S SPARE TIME

Researchers at the University of California recently completed a five year study focusing on what 11 and 12 year old children do in their spare time. Looking at children's free time between 3:00PM and 10:00PM, researchers concluded, "Parents continue to assign children to household chores on the basis of their gender, and many recreational programs are available to children of only one sex or the other."

Researchers found girls were less likely to play outdoors and more likely to play with large groups of friends in and around the house. Girls reported doing domestic chores twice as often as boys did. Making and fixing things were reported exclusively by boys. Girls also reported liking expressive hobbies such as painting and drawing. Forty-six percent of the girls were also more likely to be bored, after school and on weekends, compared with 36% of the boys. Of the children's time spent alone, more girls than boys said they read for fun.

Researchers concluded that if parents of the 764 children in the survey are typical of those nationwide, "it appears as if the next generation will have grown up with essentially the same sort of sex role socialization as preceding ones." Researchers were also dismayed that public agencies providing out-of-school services to children had a "mixed record of innovation and continuing resistance to change the circumstances that led to sex stereotyping."

# CROSSING OVER*

According to a recent report of the Census Bureau, more women and men are going into nontraditional jobs than ever before. As a percentage of firefighters, pilots, navigators, auto mechanics and crane/tower operators, women have increased their ranks. In contrast Census data show an increase in the percentage of men who are typists, dental hygienists, hairdressers, registered nurses and secretaries.

Though women, for example, still dominate the clerical field and men outnumber women in the trade/industry field, the Census data suggest that the "cross over" from traditional to nontraditional careers reflects choices both women and men are making in light of changing roles in society.

---

*Excerpted from NET Work Newsletter, Wayne County ISD, December 1983

# CHANGING WORK PATTERNS TO FIT CHANGING NEEDS*

Matina Horner, former research psychologist and now president of Radcliffe College, recently addressed the need to begin changing work patterns to fit the needs of the changing family. Horner pointed out that in the future, people are not likely to have ladder-type careers. People will have two, if not three, careers and make lateral career moves, she predicts.

The current work environment, as Horner describes it, "shows no appreciation for the realities with which families are wrestling." Women and men who are frustrated in getting done the practical work of living, of having families, and caring for their children, will not be productive on the job. Currently men and women who work together still make a lot of stereotyped assumptions about what should - and what is - happening in the personal and family relationships of their colleagues.

New work patterns and changes in the work environment must take into account the support systems both women and men need in and out of the home. "If you want educated and well trained women to have children in this society, you have to support the needs of those women and of the men in their lives to take care of the training, development and education of those children," Horner states.

The notion of simply having day care centers everywhere - as a simple answer to a complex problem - will not resolve the issue, Horner believes. Integrating personal needs with professional goals will need creative solutions. Until then, both the economic and social fabrics of our society will be strained, she concludes.

---

*Excerpted from "My Side: Matina Horner," Working Woman, January 1984

# FEMALES AND MATHEMATICS: THE PATH NOT CHOSEN

That young women in high school do not continue in advanced math as long as young men is a fact. Various reasons for the declining pattern of females entering advanced mathematics courses have been advanced. Some argue that because math is an established male domain, women experience "math anxiety." Others maintain that there are acute, but subtle, differences in the way math is taught to boys and girls. Males acquire a more sound academic background that is necessary in advanced math classes. A recent (though statistically questionable) proposition suggests males have superior mathematical ability because of a combination of genetic and social factors.

Regardless of which rationale prevails, advanced mathematics training is a critical filter in the job market. Failing to elect to take advanced math classes, young women limit their options and restrict their ability to negotiate in a society which is making increasing demands on young adults to be flexible in the job market.

School systems wherein females do continue advanced math training have common features:

* encouragement by parents, teachers, peers and school counselors to take math
* general awareness among school staff of the problem of math avoidance by girls, and the effect of sex role stereotyping
* teachers with science, math or engineering training rather than backgrounds in education
* teachers with a love and enthusiasm for math which is communicated to students
* teachers who counsel their students and place more than the usual emphasis on reasoning
* bright students grouped together in mathematics classes

Making academic choices freely and wisely is encouraged by the recognition among school staff of how biased expectations condition females to reject mathematics as a continuing field of study.

# TOTS AND TOYS*

Parents today probably find it much more "acceptable" to give their children toys which were once thought to be suitable for just boys or just girls. Girls receive science kits; boys push plastic vacuum cleaners around the house.

Yet according to recent research by a Florida professor of early childhood education, children's preferences for toys remain very stereotypic. Charles Wolfgang tested a group of preschool children who spent extended preschool periods in a day care center while he and other staff members carried out activities to challenge the children's stereotyped thinking.

Wolfgang's research proved that the children still preferred toys considered appropriate for their sex. In fact his findings were identical to a similar research project completed in 1934! Girls preferred domestic toys, paints and crayons; boys preferred construction toys, tools and building blocks.

Wolfgang speculates that factors outside the home continue to exert stereotyped, yet outdated, expectations regarding toy preferences. Catalogues, television commercials and school activities, for example, use toys to teach children how to practice at playing out stereotyped adult activities which have already been taken on by grown-ups of both sexes.

---

*Excerpted from Education Week, January 1984

# CHILD CARE AND WORKING PARENTS*

Fifty-five percent of working women with children under 5 years of age send their preschoolers for day care outside the home, according to a recent survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. Of the child care arrangements for the nation's 5.1 million working mothers with preschool youngsters, the most popular arrangement was sending children to someone else's home. About 20% of the arrangements were made with a relative; another 20% involved care of children by an unrelated person. Just 15% of working mothers sent their children to a preschool day care center.

The remainder of working mothers left children home with their fathers (14%), with relatives (most commonly a grandparent), (11%), or with a babysitter (6%). A small percentage of working mothers (9%) cared for their preschool children while they worked, many of them at home.

As one way to meet the child care demands of its employees, the U.S. Senate has authorized the spending of $20,000 for start-up costs for a day care program for its employees. Recognizing that day care is an important benefit to workers, a spokesperson for the program expects the center to be self supporting within one year.

---

*Excerpted from Education Week, May 1984

# TOMBOY BEHAVIOR IN LITTLE GIRLS CAN BE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE IN ADULTHOOD*

A recent study of professional women who were "tomboys" suggests that a tomboy childhood often serves as a source of strength later to these women. Typical of tomboys is a spirit of daring, a strong sense of competition, and the desire to be in control. Women weave these characteristics into their adult lives, according to Dr. Joseph Noshpitz, psychiatrist at the Children's Hospital National Medical Center in Washington, D.C. who studies the tomboy phenomenon. Girls have so many more choices in behavior than do little boys, Noshpitz noted. With boys, any hint of effeminate behavior is unacceptable.

Dr. Noshpitz found that the former tomboys, now adults, had a "center of gravity" that focused as much as or more on the professional than the family, and a persistent love of the outdoors. When compared to several women who were "ultra-feminine" children, Noshpitz found that both tomboys and the ultra-feminines tend to soften with age.

There is no danger in tomboyism, he concludes, and in fact, it seems to be a positive influence universal in nearly every other culture.

---

*From the Lansing State Journal, Friday, June 29, 1984

# GIFTED FEMALES

Gifted females - more than gifted males - face more conflict reconciling their academic talents with the traditional standards of achievement for women.

The conflict between the expectations for being gifted and the expectations for being female focuses on four areas: First, gifted students are expected to develop their talents in an accelerated curriculum. Yet females are trained according to the stereotyped prescription to be selfless, giving and having little "right" to develop to their fullest potential. Thus they may excuse themselves from the opportunity to develop their talents.

Second, "ladylike" behaviors are reinforced for females, especially in the preschool and elementary years. Thus girls are not conditioned by what researchers term "field independence experiences" which promote active, exploring, self assertive behaviors. The development of visual-spatial skills, an important ingredient in excelling, for example, in mathematics, has been directly linked to field independent experiences.

Third, cultural expectations regarding household and child care responsibilities are those reserved mainly for females. A major conflict, then, for the gifted female is to reconcile goals of marriage/home/family with the development of academic and career talents.

Fourth, the conflict for gifted females extends to career choices. The disciplines which challenge bright, curious minds have been traditionally closed to females and historically placed less value on

the past and potential contributions of women.

An educational program for gifted students should be grounded in the expectation that males and females have choices beyond those prescribed through sex stereotyping. In addition, the gifted program should challenge the academic, psychological and emotional limitations which females have inherited.

# BOYS AS NURTURING PARENTS*

It is important for boys as well as girls to be taught nurturing skills, according to David L. Giveans, editor of Nurturing News. Boys too are parents, and with more mothers entering the work force, fathers must be trained to share the child care and child rearing roles. Boys also need to be educated about the responsibilities of raising children because the single parent family is becoming more the norm.

There are many "myths" about men not wanting to be nurturing. For example, many people believe men do not have a natural inclination for child care and do not want to be bothered with the daily routines of child rearing. Other people think there is something "wrong" with a man if he works with small children, whether as a teacher or as a caretaker. Questions arise about his sexuality and his competence as a caretaker. Coupled with these myths is the poor pay associated with child care professions which attract few males. On the average teachers get $4.50 an hour in a day care center, compared to garbage collectors in San Francisco who get $17 an hour."

Boys need to be taught at an early age that it is important for them to practice being sensitive, nurturing, and loving because our society will require more nurturing males and fathers in order for the family to survive.

---

*From San Francisco Examiner, May 22, 1984

# THE LATCHKEY CHILDREN*

Contrary to a popular impression, latchkey children are not afraid, bored, or lonely when they are home alone. Actually they may enjoy that experience, according to a February 1984 survey by Working Mother magazine. Answers from 6-14 year olds revealed that latchkey children "...feel capable and independent at a very early age." Most children 10 years or older said they cared for themselves (and their siblings in some cases). Over one-third of the 8 and 9 year olds also cared for themselves. When most of the latchkey children are by themselves, it is for only two hours or less each day. Many of the 6 and 7 year old children indicated they would prefer to be with their mother after school, though large numbers of these children are in organized day care programs.

The children who are at home are active, according to the survey, doing homework, completing household chores, caring for pets, or caring for siblings. Many of the children who responded to the survey said they enjoyed the feelings of independence, privacy and self reliance. Andrea Burtman, who analyzed the survey data, concluded, "Their feelings about staying alone do not resemble the usual picture of the despondent latchkey kid."

---

*Excerpted from Education Week, February 23, 1984

## LOOK WHO'S DOING THE SHOPPING*

A recent observational study of 13,000 food shoppers in various U.S. cities showed that 40% of the shoppers were men. Not only did the study shock the food marketing executives (who have traditionally marketed to the female audience) but it also revealed some interesting differences in the way female and male shoppers operate. For example, men use coupons less, are "loyal" to brand names and spend less time lingering and making choices than women. In a related survey of two-income households, National Opinion, Inc. found that 16% of the men share in meal preparation and cooking. Thirty percent of the husbands reported making dinner by themselves at least once a week.

To what degree the food industry will become sensitive to this "new" market will obviously be reflected in their advertising in magazines, newspapers and on television. Sex role stereotypes appear to be crumbling in the family when everyone wants to eat!

---

*Excerpted from Ann Arbor News, April 29, 1983

## KIDS WHO MARCH TO A DIFFERENT DRUMMER*

Parents, especially mothers, are the strongest influence on a student's decision on whether or not to pursue a nontraditional career, according to a recent study in Pennsylvania. After evaluating responses from 434 students in nontraditional programs, educator James Supple concluded (as have other researchers) that parents more than any other factor influence students to break away from stereotypes in jobs.

Based on his survey, Supple found that career orientation and career education programs have some influence on nontraditional vocational decision-making. Contrary to popular opinion, however, career testing, visits to industry, individual counseling and talks/speakers from outside groups had no influence on the students' decisions.

While both male and female students complained that students of the opposite sex had trouble accepting them in classes, the attitudes of their peers were less influential than whatever attitudes, advice and information had been given by their parents.

---

*Excerpted from VEEP, Pennsylvania Dept. of Education, December 1983

# THERE IS A MEN'S MOVEMENT*

Have you heard about the "men's movement?" Many American don't know that there are men who want to change the boundaries of their lives and reshape sex roles -- so men can spend fewer hours at work and more time with their wives, their children, and themselves, for instance.

Several different groups have organized in recent years that have focused on the concepts of personal and emotional growth, new experiences with other men, as well as changing the legal and political system to help men in areas like divorce and child custody. One group, called Free Men, focused on the "guilt" that many men feel who have the desire for such things as less job responsibility and more time to spend with their children, but because of society's expectations for males, are not able to realize these desires.

Men's groups have organized to support the Equal Rights Amendment, to fight against stereotyped sex roles in the media, to encourage employers to allow flextime, parental leaves, job sharing, and other programs that would allow fathers to participate in their children's lives, and encourage both men and women to choose from a full range of options rather than gender stereotypes.

The men's movement may be small, but the drive for even some of these goals will help to reflect a new society which recognizes the need for all individuals, both male and female, to have a wide range of choices and the freedom to choose from among them.

*From August, 1984 Ms. magazine.

## A CONCERN WITH COMPUTERS

Microcomputer use in elementary and secondary schools has accelerated over the last decade. A January 1983 survey found microcomputers in 53% of the nation's schools. Economic disparities among and within school districts frequently accounts for the fact that computers are more often found in affluent school districts.

Even in the best equipped schools, the distribution and use of microcomputers may favor particular groups more than others. For example, students in gifted/talented programs may use the computer to develop problem solving skills, while Chapter I students may drill only on following the commands of a computer. The key question from a sex equity standpoint is whether the distribution and use of microcomputers favor one sex more than others.

Research to date suggests that both females and minorities are underrepresented in upper level, elective computer programming courses. There are several explanations for these enrollment data. Parents are more likely to encourage sons rather than daughters to use and learn about computers. Few adult females who use computers are visible to children as role models in textbooks, television, advertising. At the same time peer pressures and sex stereotypes have historically disassociated adolescent females with advanced math and computer training. Also, computer software continues to be intentionally packaged for males more than females, appealing to males through themes of war, violence and competitive sports.

Because elective, upper level computer classes are critical filters in the job market, access to and use of computers will influence both the expectations which students set for themselves and

the range of educational options females and males will have. Key questions concerning the distribution and use of computers cannot neglect the issue of sex equity. The cause of educational equity cannot be well served until the policy and practice of the school district - regardless of its size or affluence - challenges the sex biases and sex stereotypes which have influenced enrollments in computer classes.

Excerpted by Karla Atkinson, Office for Sex Equity in Education Consultant, from Council of Chief State School Officers Resource Center on Sex Equity Concerns, Issue XII, June 1984

## COMPUTERPHOBIA*

Few persons doubt that computer experience for youngsters in school will not give an added edge when competing for jobs as adults. Few, however, are aware of the mounting evidence that girls today are not getting as much computer experience as boys.

A recent survey of students in grades 5-8 by the Stanford University School of Education revealed that last year, of the 13% of the students who said their families owned computers, all were boys. This year the survey among the same group revealed that the ratio was now two boys with computers at home to one girl. 5000 computer "campers" who attended summer programs to build their computer skills included 27% females at the beginning and intermediate levels, and only 14% advanced female students. "Most school teachers agree that in programming classes, girl do their work just as well as boys but when class is over, 'The girls just aren't interested.' " Boys are using school computers more than girls, the researchers at Stanford found.

While there is no deliberate conspiracy to keep girls away from computers, there are cultural and social messages that discourage females' interest in computers. For example, parents still often associate toys and similar items as being for just boys than girls through an appeal to shooting, explosions and other warlike activities. Role models at home influence attitudes toward computers. A "typical" computer-owning family, according to the Stanford study team, centers on a father using the computer

in connection with buisness, his sons playing games on it and mother never touching the computer. Another influence on females' computer interests is the way computers are first introduced to females. Disassociating computers with sex stereotypes can attract more females as well as males.

Parents who want to encourage daughters to get a competitive edge on the job market by taking computer classes can start by looking at the school's computer programs. The type of computer instruction being given to students, the emphasis on math and science in the computer program, and the system for distributing computer time among students can either guide females into computers or give them computerphobia which might last a lifetime.

*Excerpted from "Daughters and the Computer," Working Mother February 1984.

## RACE, SEX ATTITUDE, AND ACHIEVEMENT: THE EFFECT OF TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

The preliminary results from a University of Michigan study soon to be included in the ERIC system speak to general issues in the socialization, social reinforcement and academic achievement of black and white females. The study highlights the behaviors and expectations of 34 teachers and 855 students in sixth grade classes in a large metropolitan area. Data from extensive observation of student-teacher ineractions in mixed classrooms, to which sexual and racial biases influence teachers' perceptions and judgments of pupils.

For example, when teachers were asked to judge their students on classroom conduct, academic motivation and personal behaviors, girls were consistently judged higher than boys in all settings - regardless of the composition of the classroom.

Teachers' praise, use of idea and use of criticism of specific children were also examined. In all three control settings boys received more praise than girls. In white and mixed classrooms girls were judged higher overall than boys. Only in black settings were no significant differences in teacher judgments of boys and girls demonstrated. In mixed classrooms boys also received more use of ideas and criticism than did girls. The one significant difference between black classrooms and mixed classrooms was that white pupils were praised more and criticized less than black students.

When student achievement in math, student attitudes toward the teacher, and students' fear of failure were compared to teacher, judgments and teacher behaviors, the findings revealed that in mixed classrooms and black classrooms, girls obtained higher achievement socres, yet demonstrated greater fears of failure, than boys. In white classrooms girls had more positive attitudes toward the teacher than did boys. The researchers concluded that teacher judgment seems to be related to pupil achievement and student attitudes toward the teacher, teacher behavior seems to be related to students' fear of failure.

The University of Michigan study is one of a handful of studies which are beginning to statistically verify the degree to which teacher expectations and student-teacher interactions can influence students' attitudes, academic performance and achievement motivation. As the literature becomes more inclusive, uncovering the damaging effects of stereotyping students, the research findings may buttress well the claims of those educators who have argued for a recognition of the double burden of racism and sexism among the black female population.